

Technical Fire Management

Advisory Committee Meeting

October 11-12, 2005

Bothell, Washington

Attendees:

Marty Bently	USFS R-8	mbentley@fs.fed.us
Karen Bergethon	USFS R-2	kbergethon@fs.fed.us
Pam Ensley	FWS	pam_ensley@fws.gov
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Ann Kenady	WI	ann@washingtoninstitute.net
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Bob Loveless	WI	bob.loveless@comcast.net
Ted Mason	BLM	Ted_Mason@nifc.blm.gov
Jerome Macdonald	USFS R-3	jpmacdonald@fs.fed.us
Dave Peterson	USFS PNW Research Sta.	Peterson@fs.fed.us
Stew Pickford	WI	s.pickford@comcast.net
Gordie Schmidt	WI	rgordonschmidt@comcast.net
Kim Soper	USFS R-4	ksoper@fs.fed.us
Neil Sugihara	USFS R-6	nsugihara@fs.fed.us

Absent: Bob Cunningham (R-1), Mark Koontz (NPS), Vi Hillman (R-4), Doug Ledgerwood (R-6), Bill Reynolds (R-9), Rusty Witwer (R-5)

Host: Washington Institute

Facilitator: Ted Mason

Recorder: Ann Kenady

Tuesday, October 11

Advisory Committee met with students in the classroom.

Wednesday October 12

The Advisory Committee, led by Ted Mason, summarized students' comments on TFM. Overall, the comments were highly complimentary of the program and most students felt it exceeded their expectations. Students strongly recommend keeping the maximum class size to 45 and keeping the standards for TFM high.

Additional comments are as follows:

- Students would have liked to have had the grading system explained at the beginning of each module, particularly in the Fuels module.
- There were problems with computers and last-minute loading of software—technical problems need to be worked out.
- Time should be dedicated for students to meet with WI staff to discuss study plans. It was suggested that the meetings could take place during the student presentations (two meetings per presentation).
- Students advised that old exams are in circulation and that it is time to write new ones.
- There should be less time spent on NFMAS, more emphasis on FPA.
- Some wanted the Statistics textbook sent out early, possibly with the student acceptance letters.

Action Items:

- Ted will write up student's suggestions to submit to WI.
- WI will allocate time and space for study plan conferences in Module VI (see action item below).

TFM UPDATE

New study plan deadlines are in effect:

October 15th--deadline to have AC representative sign off on study plan

November 15th--deadline to submit final, AC approved study plan to WI

Reid commented that the deadlines were intended to help students prepare for their final projects. He feels that although the workload has increased for faculty and Committee members, this goal may not have been achieved. Bob pointed out that quantitatively, study plans have improved compared to past years but that students were further behind in the writing process. The Committee agreed that the new process has led to a lot more interaction between representatives and students.

The question of how strictly the deadlines should be adhered to was discussed at length. It was agreed that individual representatives could set their own standards for approving and/or reviewing the study plans.

The decision as it stands for this year is to adhere to the deadlines: Committee representatives will determine individual standards for signing off on study plans. WI will accept electronic copies as well as hard copies. Students who fail to meet the November 15th deadline will waive their right to have their project reviewed by WI but will still be scheduled to present their projects in April. The Committee recommended that Committee approval be done by the beginning of Module VI, that WI use the time during student presentations to review study plans and that study plans be graded as part of Module VI (see action item below).

Action items:

- The Advisory Committee will provide WI with signed copies of approved study plans that have met the October 15th deadline.
- WI will grade study plans as part of the TFM-21, Module VI grade and will set aside time for students to meet with faculty.

REVISIONS TO FIRE ECOLOGY MODULE

Dave Peterson, Research Biologist for the USFS Pacific Northwest Research Station, has agreed to coordinate the Fire Ecology module for TFM-21. Dave presented his proposed syllabus for the module and invited comments, which follow:

- The proposed changes to the module shouldn't impact IFPM as long as the name of the module remains the same and the changes don't require approval from CSU.
- Move the field trip to Thursday of the second week.
- Include Bob Gara (professor, University of Washington) and his discussion of insects.

- Avoid the appearance of a west coast bias: the success of the module depends on the ability to present a national scope.

The Advisory Committee concurs that it is acceptable for WI to make proposed changes to the Fire Ecology module as long as the changes don't affect IFPM and CSU accreditation and as long as scope is broad enough to include a national perspective.

Action item:

- Dave Peterson will consider AC suggestions, return with a revised syllabus along with a compilation of biographical sketches of faculty.

POSSIBLE REVISIONS TO PLANNING/MANAGEMENT MODULE

Gordie introduced the problem and limitations of FMP and FPA and the different interpretations of NEPA between agencies. The consensus was to teach the models anyway, including a discussion of limitations.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS FROM LAST MEETING

-Class size has been limited to 45

-Study Guide

WI has made the suggested changes to page 65 of the Study Guide and will make document available online (see action item below)

-Payment information (see action item below)

-Final Reviews, Sacramento, April 10-14, 2006. Pam has agreed to brief R-5 on the final review coordination process. Committee will provide recommendations for panel members to Region 5 by January, 2006 (see action item below). The Committee is advised to brief prospective panelists on the degree of commitment involved.

Action items:

- WI will post an updated version of the Study Guide on its website.
- WI will create an Excel spreadsheet for student contact and billing information. AC representatives will use spreadsheet to provide WI with required information for their new TFM candidates.
- Region 5 will submit contact information for panel coordinator and AC will send recommendations for panel members to Region 5 no later than January 2006.

OTHER BUSINESS ITEMS:

-Operating Plan, MOU, USFS TFM Completion Agreement

No major changes to Operating Plan or MOU, no updates on Completion Agreement.

-Hosting TFM 20 Final Presentations April 2006 (Region 5)

-Pam will advise Region 5 on panel coordination and planning (see action item below)

-Name tags should be provided for panel members

-A short biographical sketch should be included with final paper

-Panel members will have access to Study Guide, either in printed form or via the WI website (see action item below)

-Region 5 will provide panel members with course syllabi

- Panel leaders will collect score sheets and finalize each score (see action item below)
- Presentation schedule adjusted to two hours per student, four presentations per panel member
- Panel members should be briefed at the beginning of each day

Action items:

- Pam and WI will provide Region 5 with the relevant documents and notes for coordinating the Final Reviews module.
- Ted will update signatures, make minor changes to OP and distribute to the Committee.
- Bob Loveless will come up with a summary sheet for panel leaders to use for scoring.

-Visitation schedule to TFM 21:

Math	October 17-21, 2005	NA
Stats	Oct 31- Nov 11, 2005	Ensley, Macdonald
Economics	January 2-13, 2006	Hillman, Koch
Fuels	March 6-17, 2006	Bergethon, Mason
Ecology	May 1-12, 2006	Bentley, Sugihara
Management	October 2-13, 2006	All
Final Projects	April 9-13, 2007	Region 4 is hosting in 2007

-Final Presentation hosting schedule:

2006—Region 5 (McClellan AFB, Sacramento, April 10th-14th)
 2007—Region 4
 2008—Region 8
 2009—BIA (Boise)
 2010—Region 2 (Denver)
 2011—BLM (Boise)

-Curriculum review

In reference to the request letter from Merrie Johnson (see Ted Mason's handout with Agenda), the ongoing process of the TFM curriculum review was discussed. The Committee agreed that in lieu of formal reviews done by a subcommittee it would be preferable to do curriculum reviews as part of the Advisory Committee meetings, either over time or all at once during an extended meeting.

Action items:

- Ted will get together with Chad or Mark to revise last IFPM and report back to FSTG
- Marty (as acting Chair) will work together with WI in scheduling instructor or facilitator presentations during Committee meetings

-M580 – Fire Ecology Module equivalency

Jerome gave an update concerning the development (by the Forest Service) of an equivalency evaluation with Module V. The Committee agreed to move ahead with the evaluation and submit it for review.

Action item:

- Jerome will draft an equivalency evaluation for the Fire Ecology module. Marty will get it formalized for Committee review before forwarding it to Jim Barnett.

-FTP Site

Stew presented his plans for an FTP site containing software and publications relating to TFM. Instructor materials, source materials, final projects, out of print literature and required software can be posted on site. Ted pointed out that there are possible legal constraints on BLM employees downloading software from such a site and Marty recommended that if password protection can be provided, Committee forms and documents should also be posted (meeting minutes, Standard Operating Agreement, MOU). With these considerations, the Committee approved the development of the FTP site.

Action item:

- Ted will find out if it is possible for students to download software from WI website and if so, how much lead time they will need to get approval.

-Advisory Committee leadership

Marty Bentley is instated as the new Advisory Committee Chairman and Mark Koontz (absent) is selected as Vice Chairman.

-Spring 2006 meeting

Date: February 22nd, 2006

Location: Fire Use Training Academy, Albuquerque, NM

Host: Jerome Macdonald

Action item:

- Marty and Jerome will finalize logistics and agenda and distribute information to the Committee
- Ted will send out updated list of Committee member addresses and phone numbers, including the extended Committee list.

Marty assumed Chairmanship, presented Ted with commemorative plaque.

Action item:

- Ted will send Marty all materials relevant to chairmanship.

TFM Committee E-mail Addresses
Updated 10/14/05

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TFM Committee Extended (ad hoc members and interested parties):

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